

DOE

NEWS

216-S-16 and 216-S-19 Ponds

216-S-16 and 216-S-19 are inactive waste sites located in the southern portion of the Hanford Site's 200 West Area. These sites formerly accepted relatively low-level liquid effluents from REDOX (a facility formerly used to chemically reprocess reactor fuel to extract plutonium) and the 222S Laboratories. The liquid waste came primarily from ventilation cooling water and floor drains. The sites were used between the early 1950s and the mid-1970s; liquids discharged to the ponds either evaporated or percolated down through the ground.

The sites are Underground Radioactive Material Areas—a designation that recognizes that contamination exists below ground. However, contamination has been stabilized and cover materials—grass, clean soil, gravel, or asphalt—have been applied on top.

The possibility that fire burning over the sites could release radioactivity to the air is considered extremely low. A vegetation control program ensures that deep-rooted plants like sagebrush -- which could bring contamination to the surface -- do not get established.

